

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2021*

**Statement on the Situation in Belarus**

*August 9, 2021*

One year ago today, the people of Belarus sought to make their voices heard and shape their own future through that most basic expression of democracy, an election. Rather than respect the clear will of the Belarusian people, the Lukashenka regime perpetrated election fraud, followed by a brutal campaign of repression to stifle dissent. From detaining thousands of peaceful protesters, to imprisoning more than 500 activists, civil society leaders, and journalists as political prisoners, to forcing the diversion of an international flight in an affront to global norms, the actions of the Lukashenka regime are an illegitimate effort to hold on to power at any price. It is the responsibility of all those who care about human rights, free and fair elections, and freedom of expression to stand against this oppression.

The United States will continue to stand up for human rights and free expression, while holding the Lukashenka accountable, in concert with our allies and partners. Toward that end, today we are issuing a new Executive order that enhances our ability to impose costs on the regime and announcing new sanctions against Belarusian individuals and entities for their role in attacks on democracy and human rights, transnational repression, and corruption. As I told the leader of the Belarusian opposition, Svyatlana Tsikhanouskaya, we stand with the people of Belarus as they bravely pursue their democratic aspirations.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Aleksandr Lukashenko of Belarus. It also referred to Executive Order 14038.

*Categories:* Statements by the President : Belarus situation.

*Names:* Lukashenko, Aleksandr; Tsikhanouskaya, Sviatlana.

*Subjects:* Belarus : Democracy efforts; Belarus : Human rights issues; Belarus : President; Belarus : U.S. sanctions; Foreign policy, U.S. : Civil and human rights, promotion efforts.

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